Fort Pulaski National Monument



# General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

Fort Pulaski National Monument

Preliminary Alternatives
May 2007

**Charlie Fenwick, Superintendent** 



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Welcome to the Fort Pulaski National Monument General Management Plan briefing. Today, we will bring you up to date on the progress of the plan and the next steps towards the plan's completion.

Before we begin, please note that each slide is numbered in the lower right hand corner. We will take your questions at the end of the presentation, so you may want to note the number for specific slides that you have questions about.

Let's get started.



### Purpose:

- Summarize background information
- Meetings and issues analyzed
- Describe preliminary alternatives
- Summary +
- Next steps
- Questions/comments

The purpose of this briefing is to present the preliminary alternatives for the Fort Pulaski National Monument General Management Plan. We'll summarize background information, including the scoping and civic engagement process and the key issues that emerged from that process so far. We'll describe the management zones and preliminary alternatives and, finally, we'll talk about the next steps towards completing the plan and answer any questions or comments you might have.

#### **CLICK**

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"...to promote and regulate the use of the...national parks...which purpose is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

National Park Service Organic Act.









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I'd like to start with a little bit of information on why we do General Management Plans.

The National Park Service plans for primarily one purpose—to ensure that the decisions it makes will carry out the Park Service mission as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Planning in the Park Service is designed to address issues in ways that minimize conflicts and promote solutions that articulate how public enjoyment of the parks can be part of a strategy for ensuring that resources are protected unimpaired for future generations.



### General Management Plan (GMP):

- Creates a vision and clear direction for the future of Fort Pulaski NHS (15 - 20 years)
- Broad, conceptual, goal-driven
- → Helps define which types of resource conditions, visitor experiences, and kinds and levels of development are appropriate to uphold the park's mission

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As the broadest level of decision making, the general management plan, or GMP for short, serves as the overarching blueprint for the future management of the park.

The GMP is largely conceptual and goal-driven. It broadly-defines management goals 15 to 20 years into the future.

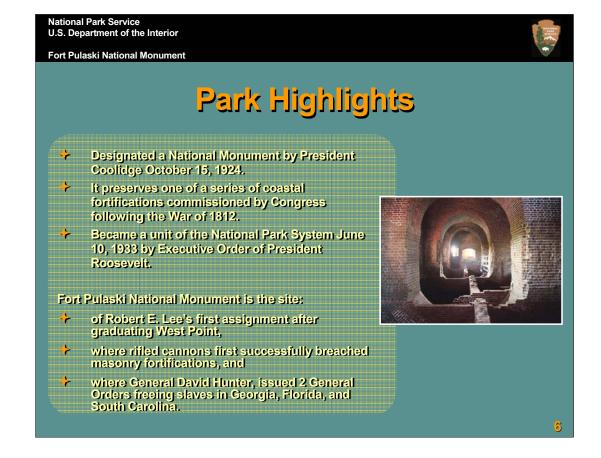
The GMP defines which types of resource conditions, visitor experiences, and management actions will best preserve resources over this period and which kinds of management, use, and development will be needed to achieve and maintain those conditions.



A primary goal in the development of the GMP is obtaining consensus among Park Service management, stakeholders, and the public about how a park should be managed for the future.

Public involvement and consultation throughout the planning process gives park managers and the planning team the opportunity to interact with the public and to learn about concerns, expectations, and values as they relate to the future management of the park.

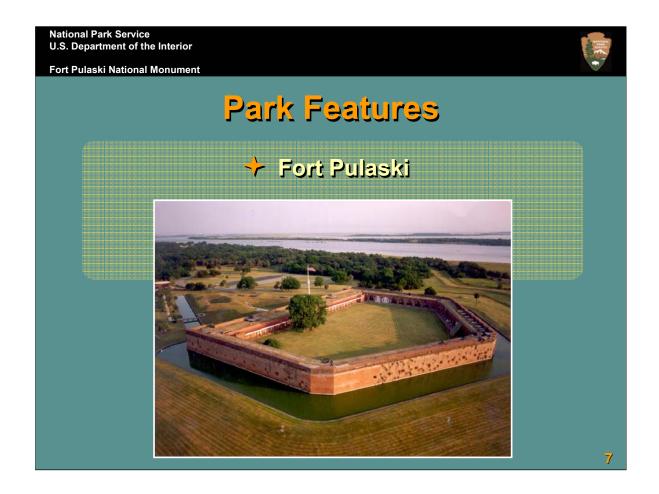
Public involvement also provides opportunities to share information about the park's purpose and significance and to educate others about the opportunities and constraints regarding the management of park lands and surrounding areas.



- Fort Pulaski was designated a National Monument by President Coolidge in 1924 and became a unit of the National Park System by Executive order of President Roosevelt in 1933.
- It preserves one of a series of coastal fortifications commissioned by Congress following the War of 1812. Construction began in 1833 and was completed in 1847 having been delayed by storms and lack of funding.
- In 2006 the park had over 333,000 visitors.

#### The National Monument:

- Is the site of Robert E. Lee's first assignment, as assistant project engineer, after receiving his commission at West Point.
- Is the site where rifled cannons first successfully breached masonry fortifications, forcing a hasty surrender of the fort, the closure of the port of Savannah, and the eventual abandonment of masonry construction for coastal fortifications.
- And is the site where Union General David Hunter issued 2 General Orders freeing slaves first on Cockspur Island and later throughout Georgia, Florida, and South Carolina. President Lincoln later rescinded these orders but ultimately issued his own emancipation proclamation on January 1, 1863.



Within the authorized boundary are Fort Pulaski itself, **CLICK** 



### Park Features

- Dikes and drainage structures
- 👉 Salt Marsh



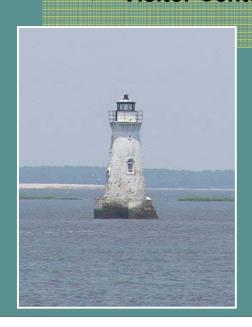
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a substantial system of dikes and drainage structures and several thousand acres of salt marsh, **CLICK** 



### Park Features

- Cockspur Island Lighthouse
- Visitor Center





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the Cockspur Island lighthouse and a Mission 66 visitor center. Mission 66 was a program created in **1956** to upgrade the infrastructure of the National Park System in time for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the National Park Service in 1966. The Fort Pulaski visitor center is representative of a more modern style of architecture than had previously been used the National Parks. The National Park Service has recently embarked on a similar program, known as the Centennial Initiative to once again upgrade the quality of facilities, resource protection and visitor services in time for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Park Service in 2016.



### Administrative Commitments

- → Special Use Permit for Harbor Pilots
- → U.S. Coast Guard Station on Cockspur Island



### Next we want to discuss Fort Pulaski's two long-standing administrative commitments:

First, the park has issued a long-term special use permit to the Coast Guard for a life saving station on Cockspur Island encompassing about 6 acres of land with buildings, a dock, and communications equipment.

The Savannah Harbor Pilots Association also has a special use permit for a dock and dormitory facility on Cockspur Island a short distance east of the Coast Guard Station.



## Step 1: Conducted Public Meetings Civic Engagement Process

May 2003	Scoping Meetings with GADOT and GA SHPO staff
December 2, 2003	Stakeholders Meetings – Bar Pilots Association, Savannah State Univ., GA Historical Society, Coastal GA Regional Development Center
December 2, 2003	Public Meeting at Tybee Island City Hall
December 3, 2003	Stakeholders Meetings – Savannah/Chatham Co. Police Dept., Tybee Island Historical Society, Chatham Co. Parks Dept., Oatland Island Educational Center, GA Land Trust
December 3, 2003	Public Meeting at Tybee Island City Hall
April 7, 2004	Meeting with Executive Mgt Group for Savannah Harbor Expansion Project
November 17, 2004	Meeting at Park with GADOT re Hwy 80
August 25, 2005	Public Meeting at Tybee Island City Hall re Hwy 80 Project
March 29, 2006	Meeting with GADOT in Atlanta re Hwy 80 Project

The first step of the GMP process was to conduct meetings with stakeholders, the public and with NPS staff to identify the issues of concern to be considered in the planning process.

Public and stakeholder meetings were held at park headquarters and the Tybee Island City Hall. News releases and invitations were distributed prior to these meetings. Following the meetings, a newsletter was distributed to elicit further public input.



### **Partners and Stakeholders**

- U.S. Coast Guard
- Savannah Harbor Pilots
- U. S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- GA DNR & GA DOT
- 🔸 Georgia Land Trust
- Georgia Historical Society



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Partners and stakeholders involved in the planning process include Federal, State, and local agencies as well as private historical and environmental organizations.

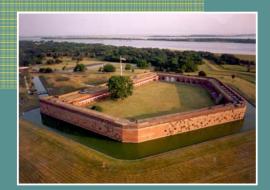
The Planning team received about 64 different scoping comments from about 20 different stakeholder organizations.



### Step 2: Analyzed Issues

- Historic Landscapes Restoration
  - Landscape has changed
  - Vegetation obscures sight lines





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In Step 2 of the GMP process, we analyzed the issues.

The comments we collected from internal scoping and from partners, stakeholders and agency representatives were analyzed and filtered into issue categories. The major issue categories are:

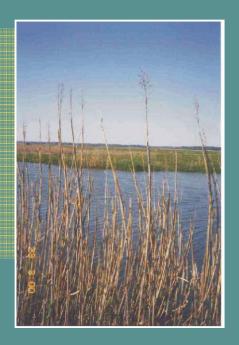
1. Historic Landscapes Restoration - The landscape surrounding the fort looks much different today than it did in 1862. Sightlines are now obscured by vegetation in most directions. Hence it is no longer possible to see the locations of the former federal batteries on Tybee Island and therefore, visitors can't fully appreciate the perspective of those who experienced the events of April 1862.

2. Federal Batteries Protection – The complete story of the siege & reduction of Fort Pulaski involves the Federal batteries that were constructed on Tybee Island. The park has been successful in partnering with other agencies and a private developer for the protection & interpretation of a Federal battery site near Goat Point. Other batteries may be brought into the park as a result of mitigation provided by the State of Georgia due to the Highway 80 project. Battery Halleck, also on Tybee Island, is a priority acquisition in our Land Protection Plan.



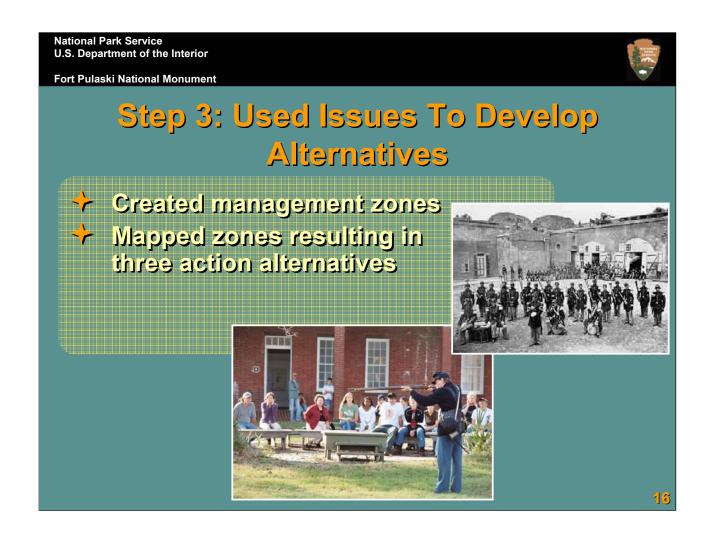
### Step 2: Analyzed Issues

- Interpretation
   African American Themes
   "Immortal 600"
   Natural Resource Themes



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And 3. Interpretation – While the siege and reduction of the fort is the principal story at Fort Pulaski, many scoping comments suggested increasing coverage of African American themes, ecological and natural history interpretation, and prisoner of war themes exemplified by the story of the "Immortal 600". The Immortal 600 were Confederate prisoners, first held on Morris Island in Charleston Harbor and later at Fort Pulaski with inadequate food, clothing and blankets, partially in retaliation for the treatment by Confederates of Federal prisoners in the City of Charleston and at the infamous prison at Andersonville.



In step 3 we used the issues to develop alternatives.

First we created management zones based on the NPS Mission and Management Policies, the park's mission, purpose, significance, and special mandates; operational needs, and issues from the public scoping process.

We then mapped the zones resulting in three action alternatives.

We'll briefly summarize the five zones in the following slides.



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# Proposed FOPU Management Zones Visitor Services Zone:

- High level of visitor access and activity
- → Primary focus is visitor orientation and education
- Area could be highly modified for visitor access and park operations

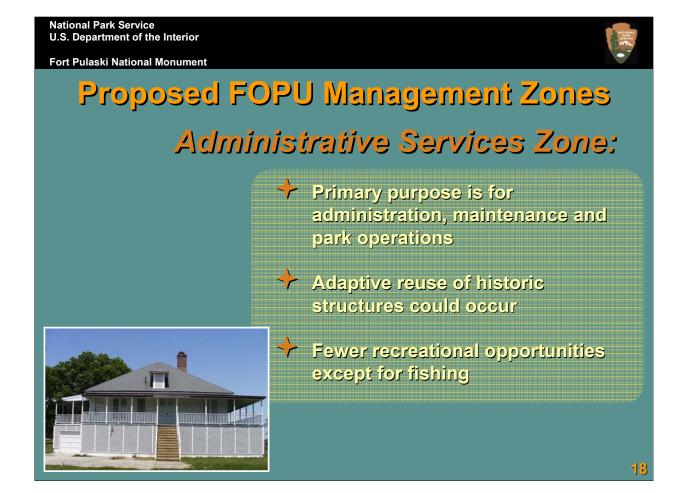


In discussing the management zones, please note that the zone names are shown in similar colors to the zones on the maps.

#### **VISITOR SERVICES ZONE**

There would be a high level of visitor access and activity in this zone, where the primary focus would be on visitor orientation and education. Relative to other zones, resources could be highly manipulated to accommodate visitor use and park operations.

The majority of visitor orientation and access facilities would be found in this zone, such as roads, parking, and a visitor center.

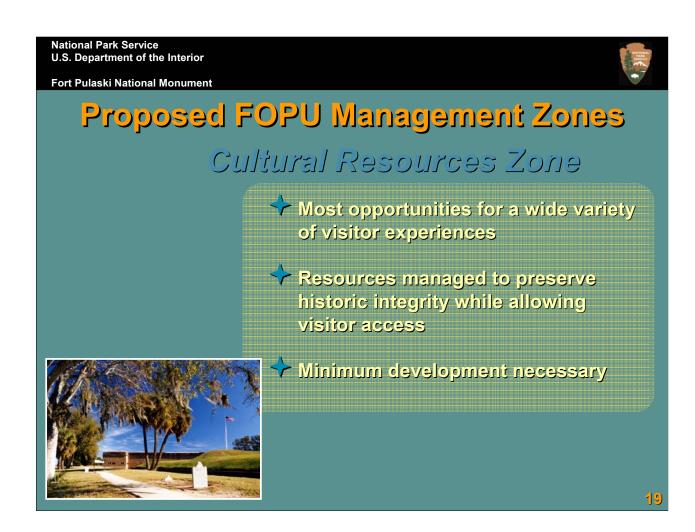


#### ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES ZONE

The primary purpose of this zone is for administrative offices, maintenance facilities, and park operations. In addition, this zone would accommodate facilities and operations of special use permit holders such as the Coast Guard and the Savannah Harbor pilots.

Resources are managed to minimize the impacts of administrative facilities and operations. Adaptive reuse of historic structures for park operations could occur in this zone.

Due to the presence of park headquarters, maintenance facilities, the Coast Guard Station and the Harbor Pilots dock and dormitory, visitors would be less inclined to participate in recreational activities in this zone than in other zones even though many activities could be accommodated. One important exception however, is fishing along the north shore of Cockspur Island.



#### **CULTURAL RESOURCES ZONE**

This zone presents many opportunities for a variety of visitor experiences, including participating in interpretive programs, viewing resources and exhibits, and enjoying solitary, individual exploration and discovery.

Resources would be managed for preserving historic integrity while allowing for appropriate visitor use. Management activities would include grounds maintenance, preservation, restoration, stabilization, and archeological investigations.

The minimum development necessary for visitor access, safety, resource protection, and interpretive purposes would occur in this zone.



#### NATURAL RESOURCE PRESERVATION ZONE

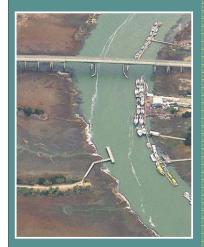
This zone displays the forces of nature and natural processes while protecting and preserving cultural resources and cultural resource discoveries. Visitor activities would be limited to low-impact activities such as kayaking/canoeing, bird watching, photography, and recreational fishing.

Management activity would be minimal, focusing on maintaining natural appearance and protecting resources from degradation.

There would be no buildings, comfort stations, or other structures in this zone. Some trails or interpretive markers would be possible in less sensitive areas.



# Proposed FOPU Management Zones Recreation Zone:



- Environment could be adapted for access and recreational use
- Specialized facilities or structures could occur
- → Variety of opportunities to participate in recreational activities
- Management actions focus on enhancing visitor experience and safety, protecting resources, and minimizing adverse impacts

#### **RECREATION ZONE**

This zone would provide opportunities for visitors to recreate by adapting the environment for access and human use.

There could be specialized facilities or structures dedicated for recreational uses such as trails, parking areas, fishing piers, boat ramps, or comfort stations.

Management actions would focus on enhancing the visitor experience and safety, protecting resources, and minimizing impacts from use.



### Management Zones

Types of Visitor Activities					
	VISITOR SERVICES ZONE	ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES ZONE	CULTURAL RESOURCES ZONE	NATURAL RESOURCE PRESERVATION ZONE	RECREATION ZONE
TYPES OF VISITOR ACTIVITIES					
Backpacking	X				Х
Camping	Х				Х
Cycling	Х	X			Х
Dog walking	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х
Fishing	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х
Group Interpretation	x		Х	х	х
Guided tours	Х		Х	X	Х
Hiking – day	Х	X		X	Х
Kite Flying	Х				Х
Mountain biking	X			X	
Nature viewing	X	Х	Х	X	Х
ORV					
Park orientation	X	Х	Х	X	Х
Photography	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х
Picnicking (with facilities – tables or shelters)	х			х	х
Skateboarding	Х				Х
Running	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х
Scientific or archeological research (by permit)	х	х	х	х	х
Sunbathing	Х			Х	Х
Swimming					
Viewing cultural resources	х	х	х	х	х
Viewing programs	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х
Walking	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х

This table, a copy of which you have as a handout, shows the types of visitor activities that are appropriate for each management zone.

The Xs identify the types of activities and development that are appropriate for each zone. We have highlighted a couple of rows as examples. Dog walking is appropriate in all zones whereas picnicking with facilities would be appropriate in the Visitor Services, Natural Resource Preservation, and Recreation Zones.

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### Management Zones

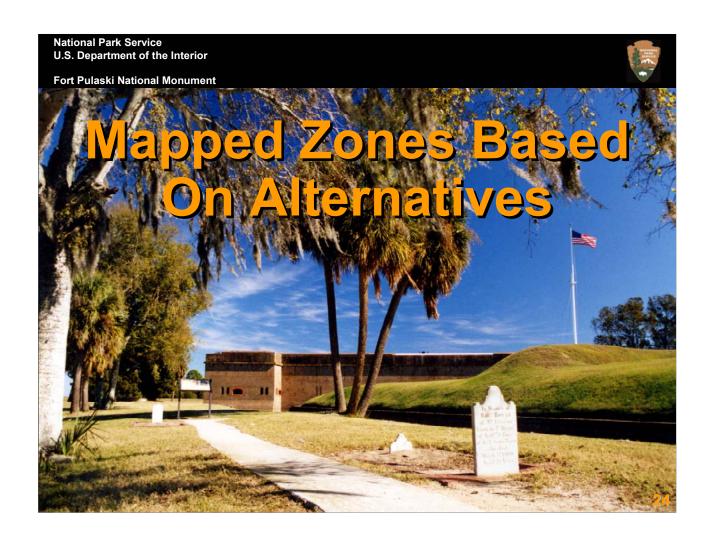
Types of Facilities						
	VISITOR SERVICES ZONE	ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES ZONE	CULTURAL RESOURCES ZONE	NATURAL RESOURCE PRESERVATION ZONE	RECREATION ZONE	
TYPES OF FACILITIES						
Administrative Office Buildings	х	х				
Collections Storage Buildings	х	х			х	
Benches	Х	Х	Х	Х	Х	
Bike Racks	Х	Х		Х	Х	
Boardwalks			Х	Х	Х	
Boat Docks	Х	Х			Х	
Comfort Station (restrooms)	х	x	x		х	
Concession Facilities	х	х			х	
Hiking Trails				Х	Х	
Mountain Bike Trails	x			x	x	
Developed Campgrounds	x				x	
Fishing Piers	Х				Х	
Group Shelters	Х				Х	
Maintenance Buildings		х				
Paved Parking Areas	х	x			х	
Picnic Pavillions	Х				Х	
Picnic Tables	Х		·		Х	
Primitive Campgrounds	x		х		x	
Sidewalks	Х	Х			Х	
Trails	Х			Х	Х	
Visitor Centers	х	х				
Wayside Exhibits	X	Х	Х	Х	Х	

Types of facilities and development that are appropriate for each zone are listed in this table. Two examples are highlighted here also. Maintenance buildings would be appropriate only in the Administrative Services Zone, while wayside exhibits could be placed in any zone.

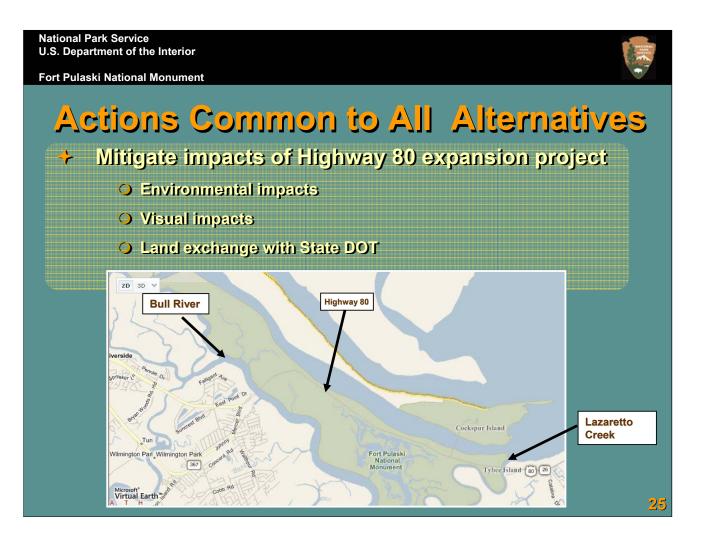
The visitor activities, experiences, and services; types of development, management activities, and desired future resource conditions are the principal elements of each management zone.

#### CLICK

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After the desired future resource conditions and visitor experiences were identified for each zone, we then mapped the zones. They are configured in different ways to create a range of three alternatives. These are in addition to the no-action alternative.



Before we get into describing each of the alternatives, there are two actions that are common to all of the alternatives.

The Highway 80 project: The Georgia Department of Transportation has been planning for several years to widen and elevate Highway 80 through the National Monument. This project could adversely impact cultural and natural resources as well as viewsheds. In addition, DOT requires some park land for right-of-way and for temporary storage of materials. Legislation to authorize a land exchange with the GA DOT for these purposes would be required. Under all alternatives, NPS will participate in the planning and environmental analysis for this project to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any adverse impacts.



### Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Mittigate impacts of Savannah Harbor project
  - Mittigate impacts on north shore of Cockepur Island
  - Mitigate impacts on Cockspur Island lighthouse



The Savannah Harbor project: The Georgia Ports Authority is planning to deepen the north channel of the Savannah River to accommodate larger container ships. This project could have very serious impacts on the north shore of Cockspur Island and the foundation of the Cockspur Island lighthouse. As with the Highway 80 project all alternatives in this General Management Plan state the intent of the National Park Service to participate in the planning and environmental analysis for this project to avoid, minimize or mitigate any potential adverse impacts.

Cockspur Island

Tybee Island (80) 26

Wilderness Assessment and Study: National Park Service policy requires that all NPS lands to be evaluated for their eligibility for inclusion within the national wilderness preservation system. We believe that substantial portions of McQueen's Island salt marshes that are within the boundary of Fort Pulaski National Monument may possess characteristics and qualities that would make these areas eligible for wilderness designation. Therefore as part of the General Management Plan process we will be conducting a wilderness assessment to determine eligibility or ineligibility for wilderness designation. If the area is determined to be eligible, then a formal wilderness study will be prepared to recommend wilderness designation to Congress.

#### **CLICK**

Virtual Earth



### Range of Alternatives

- Alternative A No action or continuation of current practices and policies
- Alternative B High degree of restoration, preservation, & interpretation of historic landscapes and viewsheds
- Alternative C Expand interpretation of cultural & natural resource themes; make small changes to existing landscape conditions
- Alternative D Same as Alternative B plus relocate visitor parking lot

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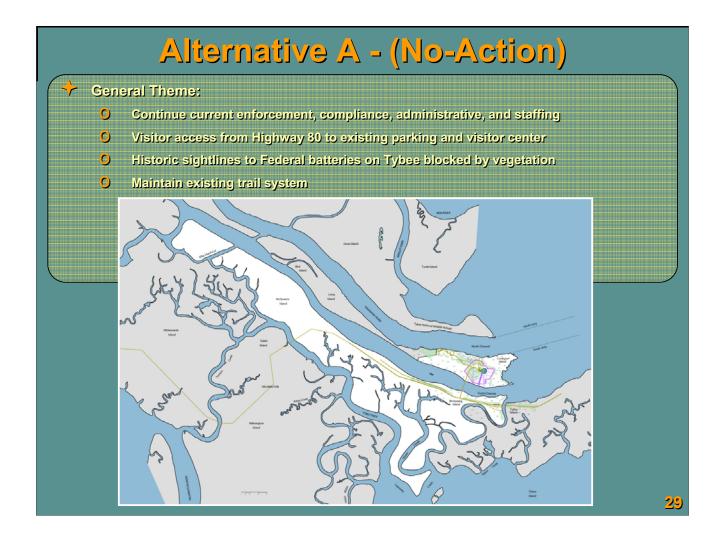
#### **Range of Alternatives**

Alternative A is the no action alternative or the continuation of current management practices and policies.

Alternative B would place a high degree of emphasis on the restoration, preservation, and interpretation of historic landscapes and viewsheds.

Alternative C would expand the interpretation of cultural and natural resource themes but would make only minor changes to existing landscape conditions.

Alternative D is identical to Alternative B except that the visitor parking lot would be relocated to an area out of view from the top of the fort and the vacated land would be restored to conditions existing during April 1862.

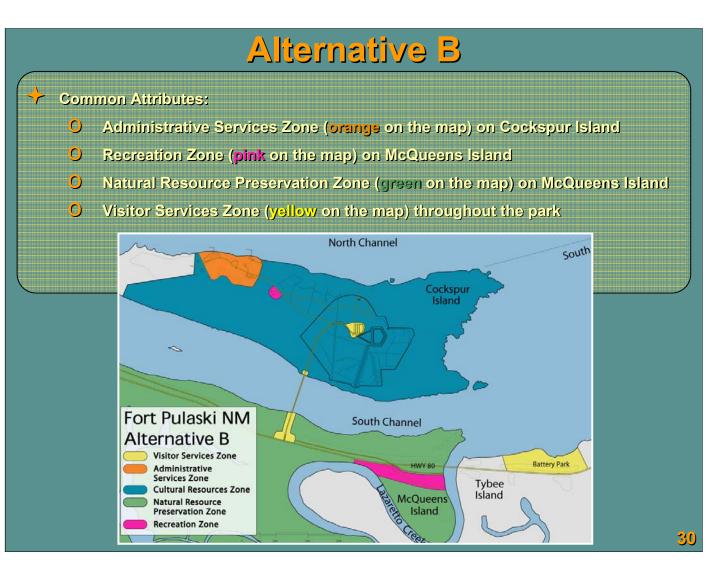


The general theme of Alternative A is to continue current management, administrative, and compliance practices.

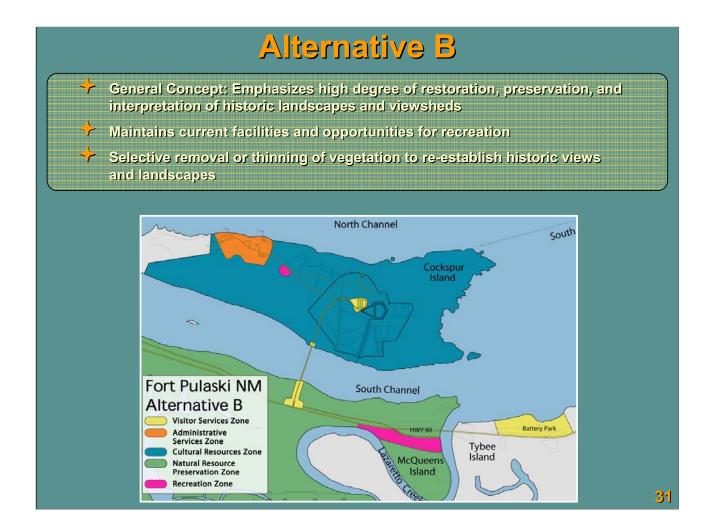
Visitor access and orientation would continue to be provided from Highway 80 across the South Channel of the Savannah River to the parking lot and the visitor center near the fort.

Historic sightlines between the fort and the sites of Federal batteries on Tybee Island would continue to be blocked by vegetation that would be maintained in its present condition except for removal of dead, diseased, or hazardous trees and invasive exotics.

The existing trail system would be maintained.



Before I describe these preliminary alternatives in terms of their unique features and differences, I would like to point out their common attributes. The orange **Park Services Zone** on Cockspur Island and the green **Natural Resource Preservation Zone** on McQueens Island are configured identically in alternatives B, C, & D. Likewise, the linear configuration (only on McQueens Island) of the pink **Recreation Zone**, is identical in the three action alternatives. In addition, the yellow **Visitor Services Zone** occupies the same areas in alternatives B and C and very nearly the same areas in **D**, the main difference being the relocation of the visitor parking lot and slightly different pathways.

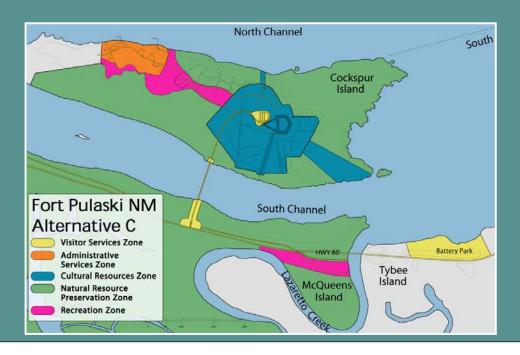


Under Alternative B the emphasis would be the restoration to a high degree and the preservation and interpretation of historic landscapes and viewsheds associated with the site.

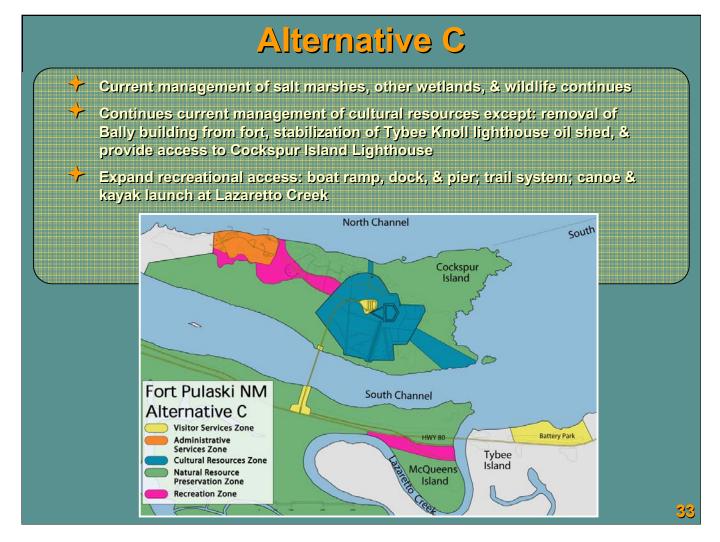
- Current facilities and opportunities for recreation would be maintained.
- The expansiveness of the cultural resource zone in this alternative reflects the objective of re-establishing a substantial portion of Cockspur Island as a cultural landscape by clearing vegetation and restoring historic views and sightlines.

### Alternative C

- General Concept: Emphasizes expansion of interpretive themes with minor changes in landscape and viewshed
- Expands recreational opportunities and facilities



The concept of Alternative C is to expand interpretation for both cultural and natural resource themes, as well as those outside the period of the Siege and Reduction of Fort Pulaski. Only minor changes from existing conditions to restore historic views and provide additional recreational opportunities would be provided.



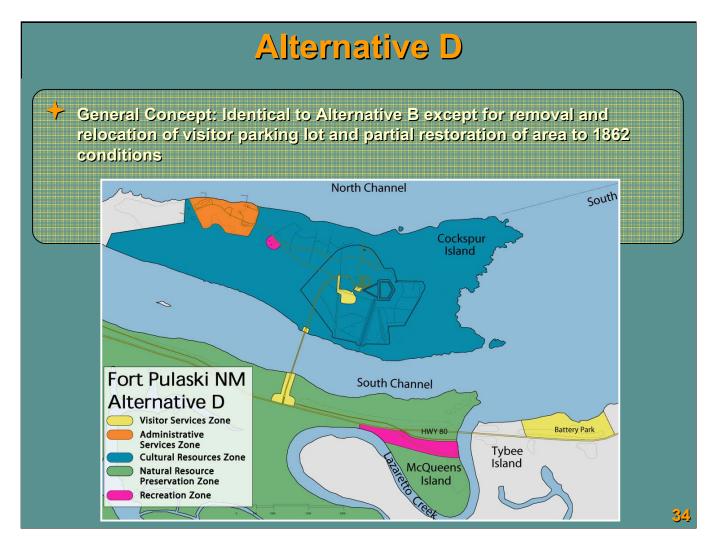
Management of tidal salt marshes, other wetlands, and wildlife resources would continue as currently practiced.

Management of cultural resources would continue current practices except:

- The park would seek funding to remove the Bally building from the fort and build state-of-the-art artifacts storage facility on higher ground, possibly outside the park boundary in Savannah.
- Structures such as the Tybee Knoll lighthouse oil shed would be stabilized.

Recreational access would be expanded by:

- Developing a boat launch ramp, dock, and fishing pier on the north shore of Cockspur Island;
- Expanding the trail system on Cockspur Island; and
- Expanding canoe and kayak launching facilities at Lazaretto Creek.

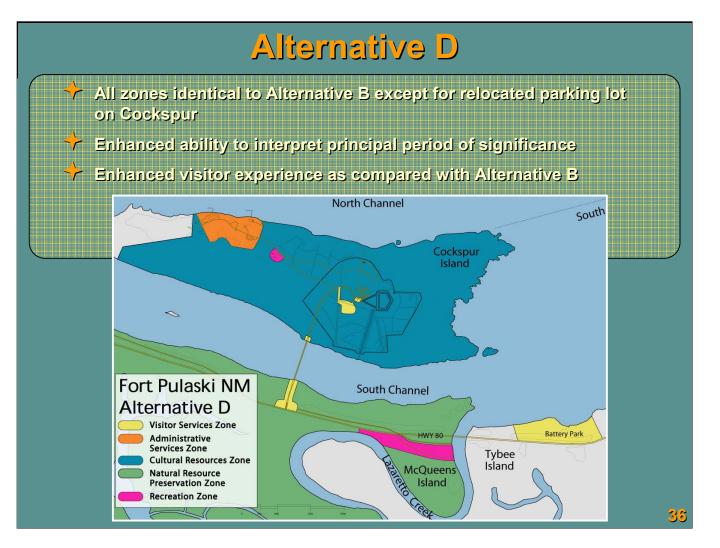


The theme of Alternative D is to restoration of the historic period landscape and viewsheds to the maximum practical degree. The alternative is identical to Alternative B except that the visitor center parking lot would be removed and the site returned to the approximate landscape condition that existed during April of 1862, the principal period of significance. The parking lot would be relocated to a site near the visitor center but outside the viewshed from the top of the fort.

### Relocation of Parking Lot



This aerial photo shows the area that would receive the relocated visitor parking lot. It is still convenient to the VC and the fort but outside the view from the top of the fort.



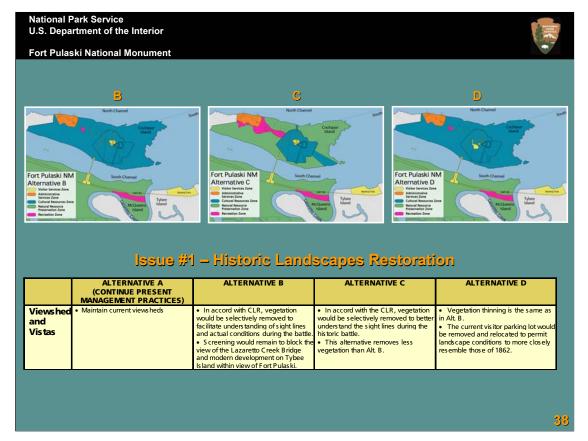
This alternative enhances interpretation of the period of significance more so than in Alternative B by restoring views and landscapes that would be much more like those that existed in 1862 than under current conditions or under Alternative B.



# How the Alternatives Address Issues



Next we will discuss how the alternatives address the issues.

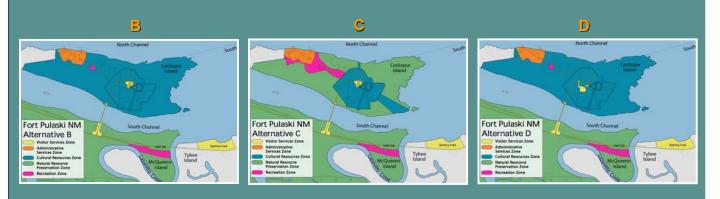


The following tables show the differences in how the alternatives address the issues. Each of the action alternative maps, B, C, and D, are shown.

The first issue is Historic Landscape Restoration.

- Under the no-action alternative, vegetation and viewsheds would be managed as they currently exist.
- Under Alternative B, in accord with an approved Cultural Landscape Report (or CLR), vegetation would be removed to facilitate understanding of sight lines and actual conditions during the battle.
   Screening would remain to block the view of the Lazaretto Creek Bridge and modern development on Tybee Island within view of Fort Pulaski.
- Under Alternative C, vegetation would also be removed in accord with the CLR but somewhat less vegetation than in B.
- Alternative D would be identical to Alternative B in terms of vegetation removal and restoration of historic sight lines, but would also remove and relocate the visitor parking lot to recreate as close as is possible and practical the visual scene that existed in April 1862.





#### Issue #2 - Federal Batteries Protection

	ALTERNATIVE A (CONTINUE PRESENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C	ALTERNATIVE D
Protect & Interpret Federal Battery Sites on Tybee	Work with public and private partners to protect and interpret Federal battery site near Goat Point.	Same as Alternative A	Work with public and private partners to protect and interpret Federal battery site near Goat Point.     Work to acquire Battery Halleck site on Tybee through donation or willing seller.	Same as Alternative A

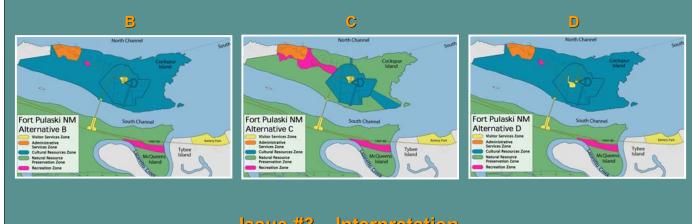
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Issue number 2 concerns protection of the Federal batteries on Tybee Island.

Under all alternatives, including the no-action alternative, the NPS will Continue to work with public and private partners to commemorate and interpret Federal batteries at a site on Tybee Island a short distance south of the Lazaretto Creek Bridge.

Under Alternative C additional efforts would be made to implement a high priority in the park's land protection plan by seeking to acquire by donation, the site of Battery Halleck.





#### Issue #3 - Interpretation

	ALTERNATIVE A (CONTINUE PRESENT MANAGEMENT PRACTICES)	ALTERNATIVE B	ALTERNATIVE C	ALTERNATIVE D
Interpretation	Continue implementation of current Long Range Interpretive Plan.	Enhance interpretation of the Siege & Reduction of Fort Pulaski as a result of selectively removing vegetation from sight lines to Federal batteries on Tybee Island.     Increase interpretation of African American and natural his tory themes.		S ame as Alt B     Improve interpretation of the Fort's lands cape as a result of relocating the visitor parking lot so that the area would more closely resemble the scene in April of 1862.

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Issue number 3 concerns interpretation.

- In Alternative A, the park would continue to implement the Long Range Interpretive Plan.
- In Alternative B, interpretation of the Siege & Reduction of Fort Pulaski as a result of clearing vegetation from sight lines to Federal batteries on Tybee Island would be enhanced. In addition, interpretation of African American and natural history themes would be increased.
- Alternative C would be identical to Alternative B.
- Alternative D would be identical to Alternative B **and** would Improve interpretation of the Fort's landscape as a result of relocating the visitor parking lot so that the area would more closely resemble the scene in April of 1862.



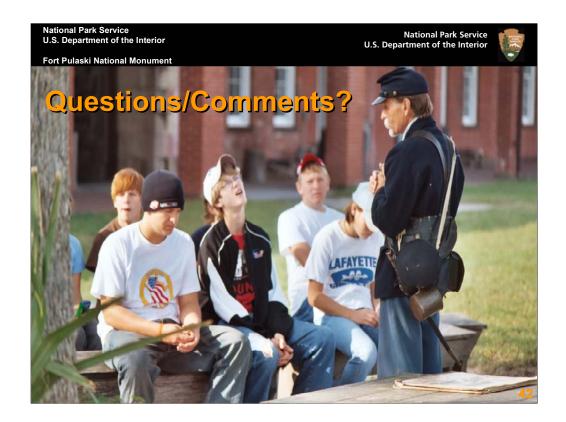
### Schedule & Next Steps



This is our estimate for the remaining project schedule and completion of the plan.

After these meetings, we'll review your comments and incorporate them into the alternatives. The updated alternatives will be the centerpiece of the draft plan that should be available by summer next year. We'll conduct another round of public meetings to hear your thoughts on the draft plan.

Finally, we hope to complete the plan by the summer of 2008.



We would now like to open the floor for questions and comments.